(e) whether any discussion on this matter has been made between the Chinese and Indian Government?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (e) Government has seen media reports stating that China plans to construct a highway on Mount Everest located on the border between Nepal and Tibet Autonomous Region of the People's Republic of China so as to facilitate the carriage of the Olympic torch to various places in the People's Republic of China as part of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, at an estimated cost of US$ 19.7 million. According to media reports, the Chinese side has said that they would be mindful of environmental concerns while doing so. Government keep a constant watch on all developments having a bearing on India's national interest and take all necessary measures to safeguard these interests.

Suicide attack in Afghanistan

1455. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA
SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of suicide attack on a convoy of the Border Roads Organization (BRO) in Afghanistan, recently;

(b) if so, the details of causalities held due to attack on a convoy of the BRO;

(c) whether the Union Government has sent a team to review security arrangements and indentify additional measures to protect Indians in the reconstruction of the war-ravaged country; and

(d) if so, the details of the reports submitted by the team; and

(e) to what extent the Indians working in Afghanistan are being protected by security agencies?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Yes. On January 3, 2008, a BRO convoy was attacked by militants resulting in death of two Indian personnel and injuries to 5 others. Nineteen Afghan Civil Security personnel/civilians were also killed and 25 injured in the attack.

(c) Yes.

(d) and (e) The security of Indian nationals in Afghanistan is under Government's constant review and scrutiny. Government are also in constant touch with the Government and Afghanistan with regard to security for Indian in Afghanistan. In addition, Government have deployed Indian security personnel for the Zaranj-Delaram road project being executed by Border Roads Organisation in the Nimroz province of Afghanistan. Indian nationals registered with the Embassy are regularly advised on the prevailing security scenario in the country.